

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Proposed Ordinance Relating to Coastal High Hazard Area Flood Regulations

This summary fulfills Washington State Growth Management Act and King County Code (K.C.C.) 20.18.100 requirements for a “plain language summary.”

Background

The current flood maps for the coastal areas of unincorporated King County are outdated. When they were developed they did not consider the impacts of wind and waves. These maps also do not establish the depths of flooding that could be expected during major storms. New coastal flood hazard maps have been prepared that use the most current mapping techniques and land and seafloor elevations. Once the draft coastal flood hazard maps are released to the public King County is required to regulate to those maps because they reflect “best available data.” King County’s current flood regulations were developed for river flooding, not coastal flooding. Therefore new coastal flood regulations need to be adopted to implement these new maps. The maps and regulations will only apply to unincorporated King County coastal areas of Vashon-Maury Island.

Proposed Ordinance

Section 1. Adds a new definition for “coastal high hazard area” to K.C.C. chapter 21A.06.

Section 2. Establishes the following standards for development within coastal high hazard areas:

- New buildings and substantial improvement to existing buildings are required to be elevated on pilings and columns.
- The lowest floor must be three feet above the 100-year flood elevation.
- The foundation must be anchored to prevent flotation, collapse and lateral movement.
- A registered professional engineer or architect must prepare the structural design.
- The applicant must provide a FEMA elevation certificate prepared by a licensed surveyor documenting the bottom of the lowest floor and whether or not the structure has a basement.
- King County must maintain copies of the FEMA elevation certificates.
- All new buildings must be landward of mean high tide.
- Non-supporting open wood lattice-work or insect screening that is intended to collapse under wind and wave loads is allowed.
- The space below the lowest floor must be free of obstruction and used only for parking, access or storage. No human habitation is allowed below the lowest floor.
- Fill is not allowed for structural support.
- Manufactured homes must meet the same standards as new buildings.
- Recreational vehicles must be on site for fewer than 180 days or be ready for highway use.

Section 3. This section states that if one part of the ordinance is found to be in-valid that finding does not apply to the reminder of the ordinance.

Date